

Muslim-American community at large. They will be dearly missed and remembered.

Mr. Speaker, I hope we all keep in our thoughts and prayers the friends and family of Dr. Hassan and Dogar Hasib. I celebrate the happiness and joy they brought so many people and reflect on the significant impacts they had on their friends, their families, and their communities.

HONORING WILLIAM PELLANT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 13, 2017

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize William Pellant. William is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 247, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

William has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years William has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community. Most notably, William has contributed to his community through his Eagle Scout project.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending William Pellant for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

IN RECOGNITION OF GEORGE M. ROACH

HON. PATRICK MEEHAN

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 13, 2017

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize Mr. George M. Roach of Delaware County, Pennsylvania, for his service in the U.S. Air Force. After he was honorably discharged, he became a career member of Pennsylvania's Air National Guard and has since been deployed to Kuwait and Qatar.

In his capacity with the National Guard, Mr. Roach has also served many humanitarian missions. He supported Pennsylvania's National Guard activation for the response to Hurricane Katrina's devastation, and was deployed again to provide recovery assistance to areas affected by Hurricanes Gustav and Ike in 2008.

In 2011, Mr. Roach was deployed to Afghanistan as a Public Affairs/Military Liaison for Armed Forces Entertainment. Mr. Roach also participated in a NATO mission to support Hungarian forces and voluntarily deployed himself to Houston this year to assist victims of Hurricane Harvey. He currently has a civilian career in TV photojournalism, and helped found FOX's annual "Military Appreciation Day." He has also produced recruitment content for the Philadelphia Police Department that the force uses to help bring in qualified applicants.

Mr. Roach's career speaks for itself. He's a proven humanitarian, public servant, and role

model for others who wish to dedicate their own lives to public service. I commend Mr. Roach for all his work over the years and thank him for his service.

NATIONAL VETERANS MEMORIAL AND MUSEUM ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 7, 2017

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1900, the National Veterans Memorial and Museum Act.

H.R. 1900 seeks to name the Veterans Memorial and Museum in Columbus, Ohio, the National Veterans Memorial and Museum.

The Veterans Memorial and Museum is a landmark that has been under construction in Columbus, Ohio, since December 2015. The Veterans Memorial and Museum will soon be open to the public and aims to display the combined experiences of American veterans from all armed encounters and branches of the military. The National Veterans Memorial and Museum is just one way we can honor veterans and their families, and guarantee that future generations know the many sacrifices that were made for us.

Ohio is an appropriate setting for the new museum, considering that the state is home to the sixth largest veteran population in the United States. As we approach Veterans Day, the passage of the National Veterans Memorial and Museum Act is tremendous news for not only Ohio's veteran community but to all veterans nationwide. I recognize the value of having a national site to reflect on the experiences of veterans throughout American history, and I am pleased to support this legislation.

HONORING THE LIFE OF DR. NAPOLEON WASHINGTON, JR.

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 13, 2017

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the life of Dr. Napoleon Washington, Jr., a local business owner, advocate, minister and community organizer in Merced County who passed away after a battle with cancer. Dr. Washington's boisterous laughter, leadership, humility, and genuine compassion for the people of Merced were qualities that will be deeply missed by our community.

Born on April 12, 1948 in Fort Baker, California, Dr. Washington moved to Merced California with his family in 1961. He graduated from Merced High School in 1966, and then went on to earn an Associate of Arts degree from Merced College and a Bachelor of Arts in Social Science at Chapman University. He received two doctoral degrees, one in Business Administration from Trinity Southern University and one in Theology from Anderson Theological Seminary.

In his youth, Dr. Washington also served in the U.S. Army before he began his 47-year career in the insurance industry in 1970, start-

ing with Metropolitan Life Insurance and Farmers Insurance. He then established Napoleon Washington Jr. Insurance Agency as Owner and Insurance Broker.

An active member of the Merced community, Dr. Washington was the former President of the Merced/Mariposa Life Underwriters Association, Former Director of North Merced Rotary Club, member of the American Legion Post 83, member of Merced County Jail Ministries, member of the Merced City Parks and Recreation Commission, and 18th President and Executive Board Member of the NAACP Branch 1047.

While community engagement was a principle of Dr. Washington's, his faith and ministry were his most focused passions. He served in various ministerial capacities throughout the state of California, including as a member of Christian Life Center in Merced, bible teacher for the Merced County Rescue Mission and chief organizer of the "Feet Changing Lives" walks in Merced.

Dr. Washington is survived by his wife of 49 years, Nadine Reed Washington, and his children Gregory D. Washington, Kimberlee Taylor and Geoffrey Napoleon Washington, Sr.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in celebrating the life of Dr. Napoleon Washington, Jr. As a leader, minister, advocate, and friend, his unique approach to life and faith have impacted countless lives in our community. He will be deeply missed by all of those fortunate enough to have crossed his path.

HONORING BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA TROOP 412

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 13, 2017

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Troop 412 of the Heart of America Council of the Boy Scouts of America as they celebrate their 85th anniversary.

Founded in 1932, Troop 412 is chartered through the First Christian Church of Smithville, Missouri. Over their 85 years of service, the Troop has had 181 scouts join the ranks of the Eagle Scouts and conducted immeasurable hours of community service. Aside from their Eagle Scouts, the Troop has also enriched the lives of a countless Scouts, training the boys in the ways of the Scout Oath—Duty to God and Country, Duty to Other People, and Duty to Self—and molding these young men in the Smithville area to become productive leaders in their community.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Troop 412 for their accomplishments and for their 85 years of service to the Smithville community.

IN RECOGNITION OF ANTHONY W. PADULA

HON. MARK WALKER

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 13, 2017

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an outstanding constituent—Anthony W. Padula from Guilford County. I am

honored to acknowledge constituents who selflessly answered the call to serve and defend our freedom. A United States Navy veteran of World War II and member of the Greatest Generation, Mr. Padula served his country with honor. Self-sacrifice, personal responsibility, and humility are traits this generation embodied. The tremendous strides our country has made since World War II are a direct result of these great Americans. North Carolina is truly fortunate to have Mr. Padula, an outstanding representative of our community and country. I join with his family, friends, and the Sixth District in thanking Anthony W. Padula for his dedicated service to the United States of America.

ESSAY IN HONOR OF VETERANS
DAY BY ANASTASIA TSAKONAS

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 13, 2017

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to include in the RECORD the words of my young constituent, Anastasia Tsakonas.

Her thanks and words of praise for our brave men and women in service ring loud and true.

Veterans Day is courage, sacrifice, and patriotism all rolled up into the uniform that an individual wore when they decided to protect this wonderful country.

Veterans Day is our reminder that we need to honor and celebrate all the men and women who have served or are currently serving in our military. Veterans are volunteers who offer their lives to protect and die for this country. It takes a lot of courage and strength to enter the military and purposely leave behind everything you love. Many Veterans leave behind their homes, families, and careers knowing that it will be a long time before they see them again. Unfortunately, with this type of sacrifice, many Veterans also know that they may never return to see any of them again.

Through a Veteran's selfless sacrifice, we as citizens receive freedom, a freedom that many people in this world would like to have but are not allowed. This freedom lets us enjoy peace, prosperity, the right of speech and religion, the right to education and most important—opportunity; all values and beliefs that this country was originally founded and built on and which continue to exist to this day because of our Veterans.

Let us take time to reflect on these men and women who receive nothing in return for protecting our country and be grateful to them that we still have our values and beliefs intact. President Coolidge said: "The nation which forgets its defenders will itself be forgotten."

Thank you Veterans, without you, I could not be me!

VETERAN URGENT ACCESS TO
MENTAL HEALTHCARE ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 7, 2017

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 918, the Veteran Ur-

gent Access to Mental Healthcare Act. H.R. 918 directs the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to provide mental health care services to former members of the Armed Forces.

Mental health services would be administered to veterans immediately after their discharge, release, or deployment, and would continue as long as necessary. These services would be excluded from those who received a dishonorable or bad conduct discharge from the Armed Services. H.R. 918 would also permit the VA to provide mental health services at a non-VA facility if necessary, eliminating the barrier to treatment for so many rural veterans who are geographically isolated from VA facilities.

It is imperative that the VA helps the men and women who served our country when they return home. Not all injuries received by our veterans are visible but that does not mean they do not exist. Many veterans return home with mental health conditions and we need to accommodate them so they can get the treatment they need. This is why I support this legislation and encourage my colleagues to do so as well.

RESOLVING THE POLITICAL CRI-
SIS IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUB-
LIC OF THE CONGO

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 13, 2017

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, last week I held a hearing on the political crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The DRC was supposed to conduct elections one year ago this month in order to achieve the required transition of political power by December 19. However, after years of stalling on making preparations for elections, the Government of the DRC failed to hold elections last year and relied on a constitutional provision that President Joseph Kabila could not step down until an election was held to select a replacement.

This interpretation is in apparent contradiction to other constitutional provisions requiring elections to be held on time and limiting Kabila to two terms. The election commission has just announced that elections cannot be held until sometime in late 2018, with an inauguration in early 2019. The prolonging of the Kabila regime has ratcheted up tensions in the country.

Polling has indicated that a majority of Congolese want the Kabila government to end and be replaced by a transitional government until a new one can be elected.

Enduring conflict hotspots in eastern DRC have seen recent flare-ups, while new hotspots have emerged in previously relatively stable areas, such as the central Kasai region and southeastern Tanganyika province. The conflicts in Kasai and Tanganyika alone have caused the displacement of nearly 2 million people since mid-2016, giving DRC one of the highest rates of human displacement in the world. Political unrest in urban centers, a string of large prison breaks, and violent attacks in Kinshasa by members of a religious sect that has declared itself in opposition to Kabila have further contributed to worsening insecurity.

The conflict in Kasai, which reportedly was first sparked in 2016 by the murder of a traditional leader by state security forces, has become a catastrophic humanitarian crisis, featuring severe atrocities and the widespread recruitment and abuse of children. Meanwhile, the ongoing conflict in eastern DRC at one time saw violent activity by two dozen militia groups and an out-of-control national army, resulting in the systematic rape of about 50 women and girls each hour.

The hearing intended to look at possible solutions to a political stalemate that could very well lead to further violence and upheaval in a large African country bordering on nine neighbors. It followed a successful resolution on DRC that I introduced and was passed by the House last year and new legislation that Ranking Member BASS and I are introducing soon.

We understand that there are no easy solutions to the current crisis in DRC. A negotiated transition likely could be achieved if President Kabila were convinced that neither he nor his family would be prosecuted for human rights violations or corruption. However, that would reward them for abusing their citizens and plundering the country's resources, and that is even if members of his government were not covered.

A palace coup might take place to oust Kabila. That is not unknown in the DRC. Kabila's father, Laurent Kabila, was assassinated in office in 2001. Mobutu Sese Seko, who the elder Kabila had overthrown, had himself overthrown an elected government in 1965. He was chased from power and fled into exile in 1997. However, a coup would not support international efforts to instill democratic practices in the DRC and could lead to protracted in-fighting and national chaos.

The status quo, as detailed earlier, is already leading to growing violence and will not lead to a peaceful solution the longer a transition is delayed. In fact, it is more likely violence could escalate and spill over into neighboring countries as did conflict in 1996 through 97 and 1998 through 2003.

Over the past year, we have heard many promises by the Government of the DRC about when elections would be held. There have been several dates given for when voter registration would be completed during this past year. The current government timetable calls for voter registration to extend to a point at which elections couldn't be held in the DRC until late 2018 with an inauguration early in 2019. That would mean that Joseph Kabila would have had an extra half-term in office, when the constitution precluded him from going past December 2016.

Consequently, we heard last week from the State Department on our government's diplomatic efforts to resolve the transition stalemate and the U.S. Agency for International Development on our government's programs on the ground to promote democracy and free and fair elections.

Our second panel last week consisted of scholars and activists who gave us their informed suggestions on how we can break this political stalemate and prevent more bloodshed in the DRC.

Again, no solution will be easy or without cost, but non-action would have an even higher cost in human lives. That we must not tolerate.